CRUSADE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

FEATURING
THE JOY OF LEARNING TO TEACH

2018/12/13 09:48

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THE JOY OF LEARNING TO TEACH

It all started as a dream and when the dream came true after long struggle with gaining a masters while working and clearing the SET exam for the purpose of becoming an Assistant Professor. I was allotted Mechanical A section during odd semester 2018-19 academic year. When I first met my 51 students, we worked together to consolidate all the expectations of the students and my expectations as a facilitator inside the classroom and outside the classroom. My first decision after becoming a teaching faculty was to make sure to value all the students and maintain equality inside the classroom. We made sure that everyone, including the student who is considered to be the last person in the score sheet need to be treated on par with the one who scores the first mark.

I started learning the names of all the students and started building a very good rapport with them. I made myself available for everyone to approach me and ask anything they wanted. They had the freedom to stop me at any time during the sessions and I encouraged them to have more discussion based sessions. I focused more on the low performing students providing them more opportunity to talk in front of the class and volunteer for tasks without any hesitation. Students who were good at English language were encouraged to mentor the students who struggle with their language.

THE JOY OF LEARNING TO TEACH

In order to achieve this mixing of students and ensure that everyone interacts with all the others, I used to create new groups during every session thus shuffling the students to various benches. This helped them learn about their classmates and helped them come out of their shyness and hesitation to talk to other students in the classroom. This I found was very important in order to achieve a classroom that valued everyone and in return everyone provided enough space for others to complete their tasks.

One of the major things that I introduced was assignments after each topic with a definite deadline. I made it very serious that all my students submit their assignments on time in their own handwriting. They were advised to take a snap of the written work or recorded speech and send it to me on or before the deadline. To my surprise, I was able to collect 13 such assignments and everyone submitted it without fail. The reason for going with the assignments is to make them work on the concepts they learnt as a group or in pairs during the class time. This helped them check their understanding and give them a practice before the exam too. They also maintained a folder in which they kept their class worksheets and the assignments. Students who were struggling in communication skills and the language were given more opportunity during the regular sessions and tutorial sessions. The reason for doing this was explained to all the others clearly, because they shouldn't feel left out or discriminated.
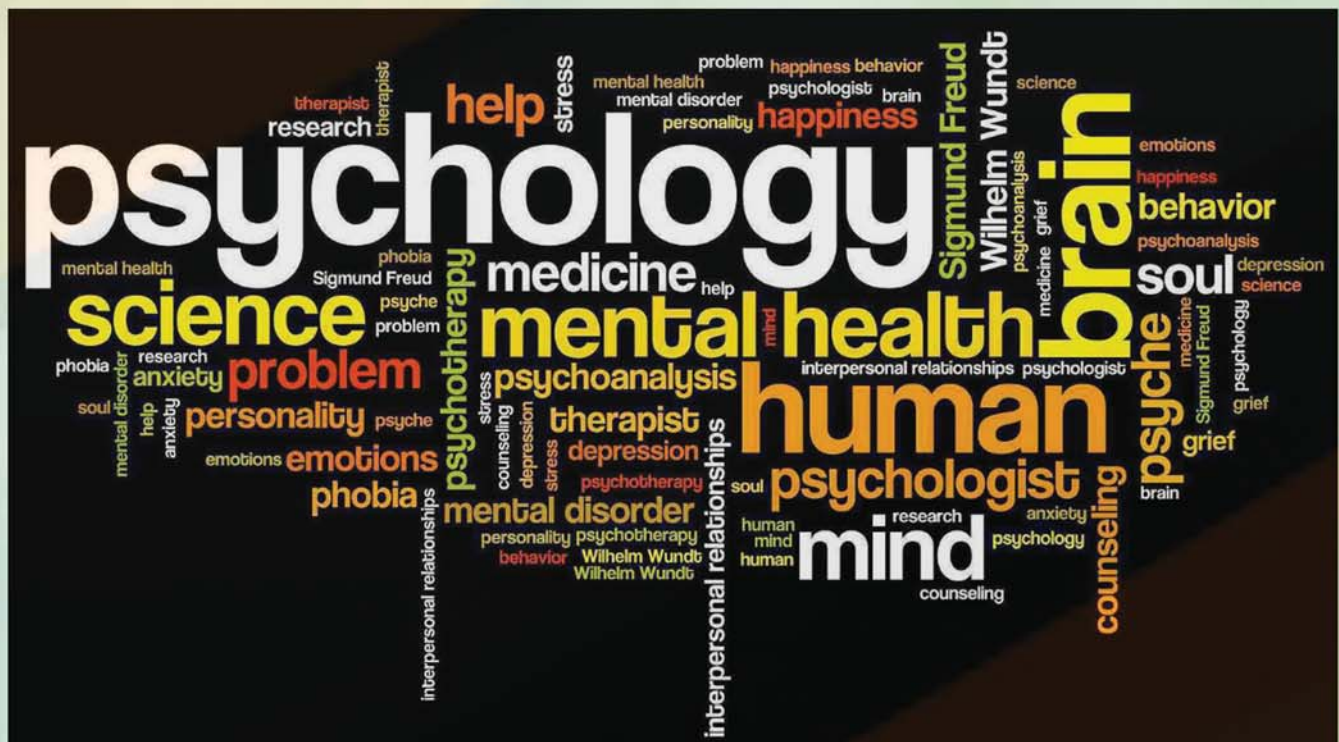
THE JOY OF LEARNING TO TEACH

We also made sure to build more speaking sessions in the form of self-introduction, pair discussion, group discussion, debate, storytelling, interviews etc. This way, it didn't only make the classroom fun-filled but also instilled more confidence in the minds of the slow learners. All those didn't talk during a session, were asked to listen carefully, ask for clarifications and write a summary of whatever they listened. This way, we also increased the listening skills of the students inside the classroom. I asked few students in between the speaking session to brief whatever they listened or discussed so far to ensure that people were paying attention.

Finally, we also encouraged students to write for Crusade, the college magazine thus one of the editions (September), all the articles were contributed by I year Mechanical A section students. When the semester ended and the results came out in January, the students were happy that everyone successfully completed their Communication Skills I. Now, in the second semester, I have encouraged the students to enrol either in Business English Certificate or in NPTEL courses. Thus, 30 students are in BEC certification training and the remaining 21 have enrolled in an NPTEL course, 'Speaking effectively'. I hope, we will have a better session throughout the second semester too.

I thank all my students for making me a better faculty and continue to help me improve my understanding about the students, subject and myself. I enjoyed the first semester journey and hope my students feel the same as it reflected in the feedback that they wrote for me. I look forward to improve my ability in handling students, facilitating the sessions, motivate them and encourage them to become better persons both at a professional and personal level.

THE NEED TO LEARN BASIC PSYCHOLOGY

For long time, it was believed that psychology dealt with people who were mentally ill. So, people naturally carried a negative mind-set towards the field of psychology and the word counselling. In reality, learning psychology would not only help an individual to understand oneself, but it would also help individuals understand the behaviours, intentions and backgrounds of others as psychology is the study of human mind and its functions that affect a person's behaviours in various contexts such as family, society, education, workplace etc. So, learning how one's mind works and what contributes to that trend would depend on one's genetic disposition and the environment where one grows. Thus, learning basic psychology has multiple benefits to an individual and to the society at large.

There are multiple fields where psychology has taken a stronghold such as Educational Psychology, Forensic Psychology, Medical Psychology, Industrial Psychology, Social Psychology, Developmental Psychology and Counselling Psychology etc. Each area addresses the issues arise within that specific context. No man is an island, thus whatever one does would affect the way one thinks, feels, behaves in a given context which would further influence the entire functioning of the given field and people associated with it.

THE NEED TO LEARN BASIC PSYCHOLOGY

While there are many fields that address the need for a person to function healthily, there are also concepts that drive the need to learn basic Psychology. Human characteristics such as personality, motivation, learning, intelligence, moral and ethical reasoning, culture etc. are studied under Psychology. All these concepts are the most important aspects under the field of psychology that would drive a person to function to the person's fullest potential. People are basically capable of doing things but their environment determines how one would utilise one's abilities and skills to achieve what one intended to achieve.

John B. Watson who belonged to the behavioural School of Psychology bravely proclaimed "give me a dozen fully formed babies from any background and I would make them whoever you want them to become such as doctors, engineers, teachers, scientists, thieves etc." This bold proclamation brings out the importance of one's environment which would make or mar a person. All the students come to the educational institutions as clean slates. While few, somehow manage to overcome the peer pressure and utilise the support system effectively, many fall prey to the pressure and lose hope. While we learn psychology in order to understand our own actions and motives behind those actions, it's also to understand others, their actions and motives better thus adjusting our actions to avoid any conflicts or move away when there is no scope for any improvement.

THE NEED TO LEARN BASIC PSYCHOLOGY

Learning to strike a right balance would help one work lead a happy and content life while at the same time, live and work with others effectively. Being with someone doesn't mean one would be able to work with them because work life requires one to overcome one's ego and cohabit with people from multiple backgrounds.

The society is under constant change and the world is becoming a global village. This brings sea of change in people's lives in terms of lifestyle, culture, food habits etc. We are also under tremendous pressure to come out of the negative influence of the technological advancements that limit the thinking capability of our younger generation. Technologies and gadgets move our kids from social interaction by creating a virtual world for them in the internet where they wear multiple masks which further affect their personality, face to face communication, truthfulness, patience etc.

Thus, it's the need of the hour that we adopt a policy to teach basic psychology in the schools and keep it as an elective course in colleges which students themselves would learn. One's college education should not only teach how to make a living but also should teach one how to live. Our youngsters need facilitators, trainers, people who would motivate them more than a teacher. There are people out there who are totally confused about what they should do and live in fear and hesitation to look for help. This population needs to be strengthened and encouraged to seek help while we also have the responsibility to make the counselling facility available in multiple points in the society. The government, schools, colleges and communities have the responsibility to make help available for our children who would face more psychological dilemma in multiple fronts due to the changing environment.

THE NEED TO IDENTIFY ONE'S REAL SELF

Know thyself is one of the age old saying from the ancient philosophers. As the world develops and becomes more digitized, people are distracted too much that they are always worried about people and events that occur outside. They are too busy collecting information from the new media such as the social networking sites and forwarding it to other people. During this process, one loses oneself and runs behind others for opinions. These opinions regarding their posts and photos in social media determine whether they would be happy or not.

As the quote says, "Take a little while alone to do whatever makes a happy you", one needs to spend more time with oneself in order to identify one's true self. This needs one to move away from the madding crowds that would occupy the thoughts of people thus preventing their journey towards self. One needs to become aware of one's abilities, opportunities, challenges and support system in order to achieve whatever one dreams. This needs a deeper journey inwards and not outwards. It doesn't happen just like that because moving away from the clutches of peer pressure and emotional bonding requires one to be bold and daring. Travelling towards oneself would be scary at times because it requires one to be open to change and critical about oneself. One needs to identify oneself in terms of one's present status, current needs and future tasks.

THE NEED TO IDENTIFY ONE'S REAL SELF

Self-concept is the sum total of one's belief about oneself in terms of one's abilities, attitudes and personality. This could have been attributed by others as well, because one would be forced to build beliefs about oneself. We judge ourselves by what we are capable of doing but others judge us by what we have already done. What we are capable of doing depends on what others think we would be able to do. While it's important to value what others think of ourselves, it's also important to evaluate and accept whatever we feel applicable to us. What is more important here is that one needs to take some time to analyse one's beliefs and others' criticisms in order to form a better self-concept.

Do they love you or the mask you put on everyday?

Self-esteem is the opinion one holds about oneself. High self-esteem thus becomes more important for one to function effectively in the society. Low self-esteem pulls down a person from acting. However, high elf-esteem shouldn't lead one to be arrogant, so as to become over confident. It's about being content and happy about what one is and what one has. Most people, try compare themselves with others thus not able to be content with one's own self because comparison in any form is wrong besides, each one and one's immediate environment is entirely different from the others. So, evaluating one's self-esteem and having one's immediate environment in front would help one make a wise decisions.

THE NEED TO IDENTIFY ONE'S REAL SELF

Travelling inwards helps one build a better self-concept and high self-esteem that would in turn develop a better personality. Building a better personality becomes very essential, as one's personality is built with certain characteristics that are unique. This uniqueness is one of the most important qualities that would take a person to greater heights. Working towards this uniqueness requires this inward journey but at times, it would be scary to travel inwards and at times, it would be very difficult to find out what one wants or what one wants to become.

"Winners don't do different things but they do things differently" – Shiv Khera. Identifying one's real self would help one do things differently thus staying unique and successful. Only those who were able to travel inwards to identify one's strengths, weaknesses, abilities, challenges, skills and opportunities would be able to come out with insane ideas that would revolutionize the entire world. They would be doing the same thing that others had been doing for many years but they would do the same thing differently. These people who were able to identify their real self wouldn't stay static but they would be very dynamic and would move others around them.

It would be better to spend some time in a day alone to renew oneself and wake-up as a new person every day because throughout the day, we are preoccupied with the thoughts of others, comparing with others, thinking of our past mistakes and dwell in them. It becomes very essential to examine oneself critically in order to find one's real self rather than denying the existence of anything that needs to be changed, modified or improved. Knowing oneself is the first step to wisdom but the digital world would pose more threat through its virtual world and glamour and the secret is in overcoming this imaginary world.
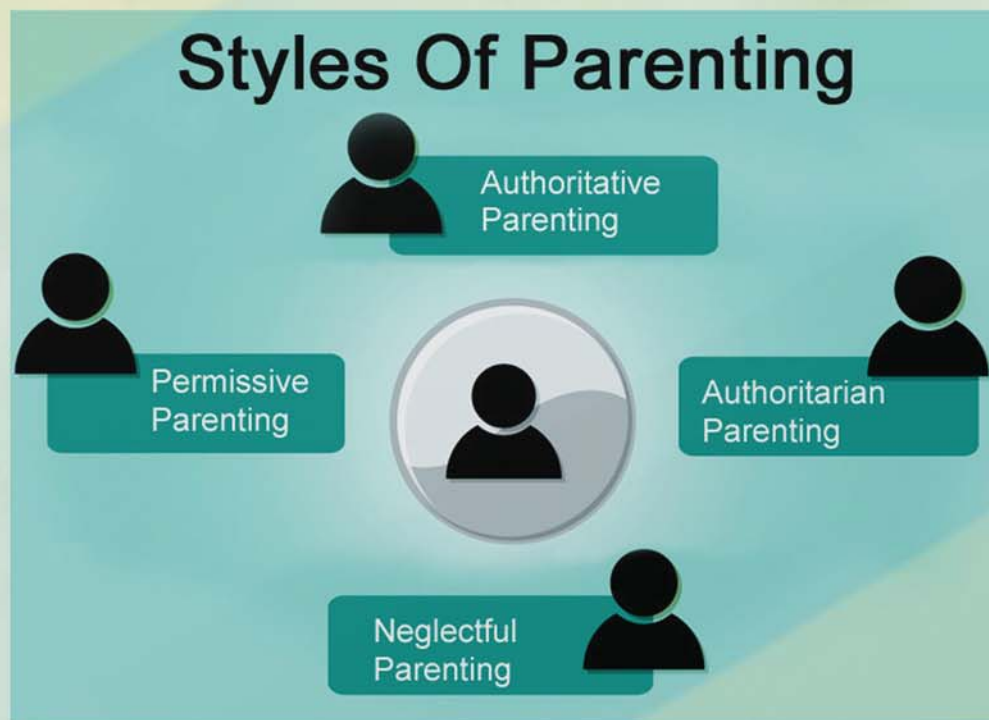
"It's easier to develop strong children than repair broken men" – Fredrick Douglas. Parenting is an art and this art is what would make the future generation. Children are individual people who came to this world in order to fulfil their own destiny and not anyone else, thus parents are only the means through which God sent the children to this world. This means, all the children have the rights to live a decent life with opportunities to thrive and achieve whatever they dream of. If few children's dreams are crushed and if they are pushed away, we are living in a society that is unjust. Parents play a major role in providing the children with the necessary love, care, material support and guide them through opportunities. The issue is that each parent is different because it's their past that would shape their parenting and not the child's present requirements. This conflict is the beginning of a child's miseries.

Styles Of Parenting

- Authoritative Parenting
- Permissive Parenting
- Authoritarian Parenting
- Neglectful Parenting

"Kids are like a mirror and what they see and hear, they do. Be a good reflection to them" – K. Heath. All the initial attitudes, temperaments, behaviours and thinking ability are transferred from the parents to the children even before they go to the school. What they would become in the future depends mostly on the parenting style the children had at home. Parents, depending on their parenting, either help the child become an independent person or make them more dependent on them.

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CHILDREN ARE THE PRODUCT OF THEIR PARENTING

There are parents who dominate the kids through their entire life while few others who do not care about their children because they are too busy thus neglecting their responsibility. There are four types of parents such as Permissive, Authoritative, Authoritarian and Uninvolved.

Permissive parents are very loving, caring, warm and respond to all the needs of the children. They would die to give anything to the child but will have less control and strictness. This would develop a spoil kid who will have all the material things and pampering but wouldn't be guided and controlled in its activities. Most of the parents today fall in this category where they shower unconditional love and care and give their children whatever they want but wouldn't monitor their children's activities because the children have become the bosses today. These children wouldn't listen to anyone in the future and would find it difficult to work under guided, controlled and monitored environment. They would rebel against the rules and regulations.

Authoritative parents on the other hand are loving, caring, responsive while at the same time set high expectations, employ strict disciplinary codes, monitor their children and guide them. This helps the child feel part of the family while at the same time would help the child do things which they prefer with more parental guidance and control. These children would develop as individuals who are independent while at the same time, adhering to the rules and regulations. They would also be obedient and participative in the classrooms and loyal to the company they work for. This parenting style is considered to be the ideal parenting style.
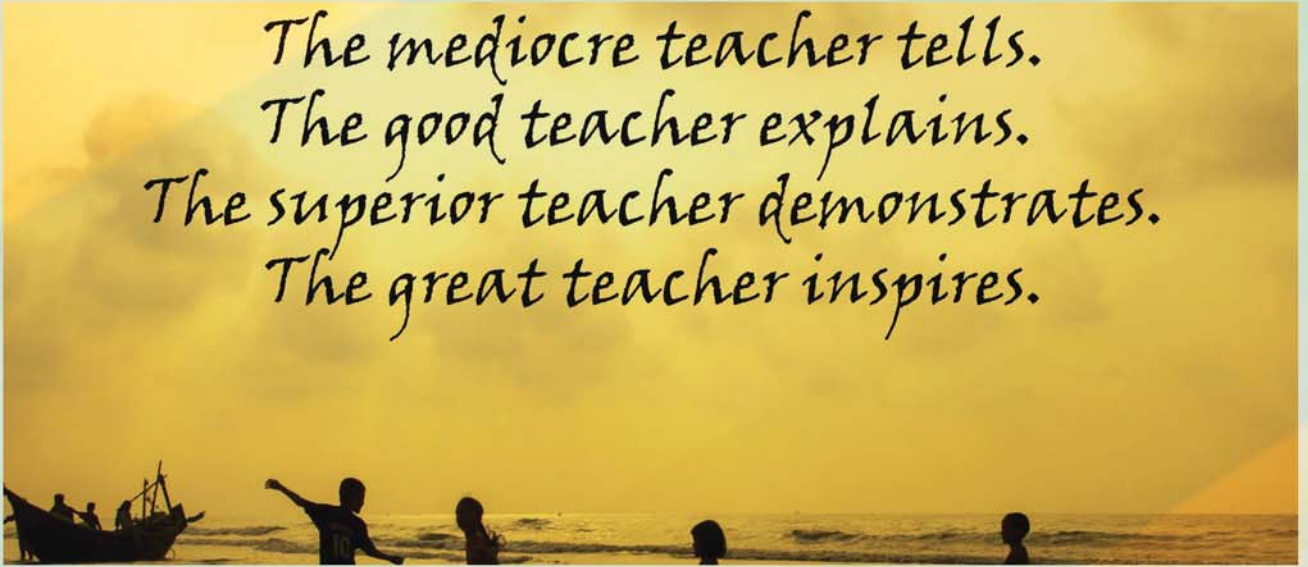
CHILDREN ARE THE PRODUCT OF THEIR PARENTING

Authoritarian style parenting deploys strict rules, control and domination while showing less or no love. These parents would also treat their children like prisoners who are to be punished. They set high expectation unlike the permissive parents but do not provide any support unlike the authoritative parents. These children would either develop as submissive people or rebels who would fight authority in theri later life.

Uninvolved or negligent parents neither set any demands nor respond to the needs of the child thus remaining uninvolved from the lives of the child. These parents either are too busy working or too busy repairing their own life. Children under this parenting style will have a hard time because they wouldn't be nurtured, shown love or guided. This would leave them vulnerable to many antisocial behaviours because they would demand love and look for opportunities by threatening others in order to look for avenues that wouldn't conform to the norms of the society or the legal system while pursuing whatever they want.

According to American Psychological Association (APA), ensuring children's health and safety, preparing children for life as productive adults and transmitting cultural values are the primary objectives of parenting. It's those children under authoritative parenting who would grow as more independent, law abiding, and focused. So, a child should be viewed from this background because every child who come to us may have a different story to tell us due to the parenting style they had. Being open to listen would ensure that we don't unnecessarily blame, criticise or discriminate a child for their behaviours because they are the product of their parenting.

THE NEED FOR TEACHERS TO INSPIRE MORE AND TEACH LESS

Today's children who get into academic institutions are more informed, more talented, more tech savvy and more independent. The opportunities and freedom available for them also make them more vulnerable to comparison by their parents, society and teachers. As time pass by, the expectations of the family, academic institutions and the society have also changed. Result oriented society focuses more on the marks and not on the skills which has put most of the students at a disadvantage because they are not treated equally on par with the high scoring students. Students are from different demographic, economic, social and family backgrounds, thus it becomes very important for the teachers to understand them well, in order to keep them inclusive.

> The mediocre teacher tells.
> The good teacher explains.
> The superior teacher demonstrates.
> The great teacher inspires.

Once a student was sent to me by a faculty member stating that he was very naughty in the class and not focusing on the subjects. This made the faculty yell at him periodically and made the faculty develop a negative approach towards the student. I made him sit and started listening to him. The time he understood that I was ready for listening, he opened up and started telling his story of how he was compared to his cousins by his parents. He also told that he was not allowed to go out of home, not given mobile and often yelled at. I asked him whether he did something that upset his parents during his school days. He replied that there was an incident which upset his mother thus she is scared of sending him out or use his mobile.

THE NEED FOR TEACHERS TO INSPIRE MORE AND TEACH LESS

After few minutes of casual interaction, he agreed that he was not focusing on the subject but promised that he would do better. He failed in 5 subjects in CCET including Communication Skills but promised that he would do better in CCET II. I happened to meet him after CCET II and he told that except Maths, he passed in all the other subjects. Before leaving, he told me that he expected that I would scold him because that's what was happening earlier. He also told that I was the first one to listen to him without scolding or yelling at him and accepting him as he was.

This made me think how important it is to motivate and inspire students rather than just hitting them hard in front of others with verbal assault. Most of them would like the teachers to judge them by whatever they have rather than whatever the teacher expects because neither all the students can score hundred marks nor would they all have the same skills and interests. This is because of the different backgrounds the students are raised and different environment they had. Teachers can impact students more than anyone else because people with passion to teach would not only like their subject but all those who learn it. Teaching is about learning to handle students with respect, understanding them from their background and accepting them with what they have.

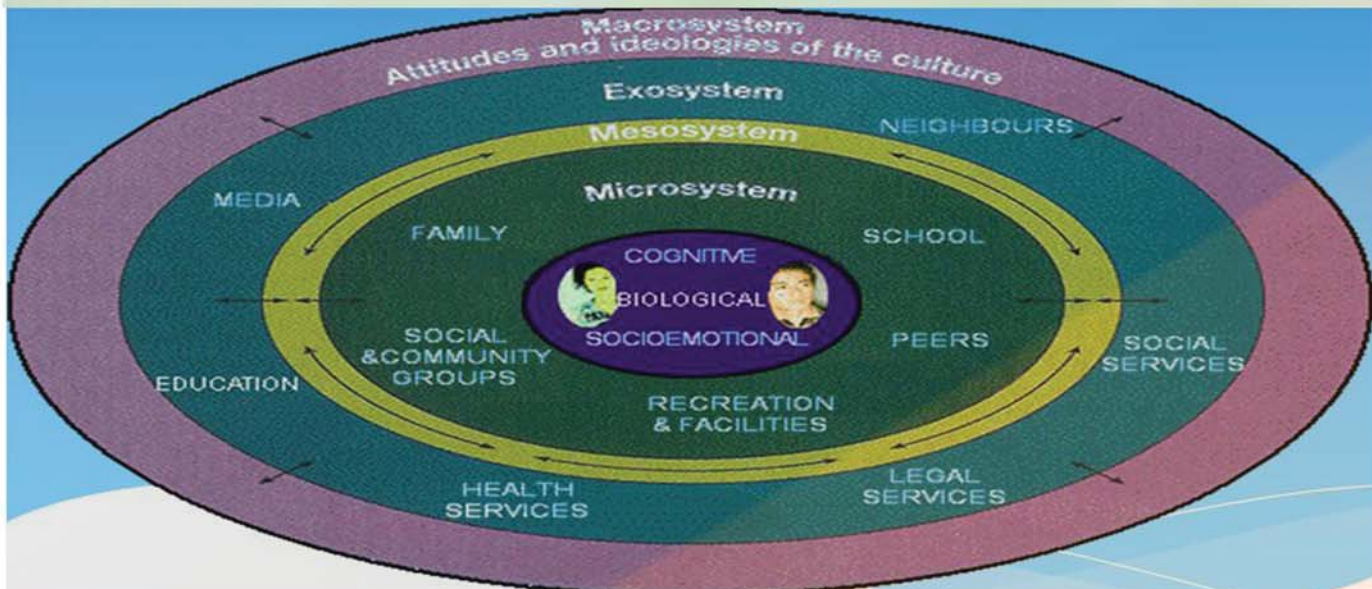# THE NEED FOR TEACHERS TO INSPIRE MORE AND TEACH LESS

Thrusting huge expectations, comparing them with others, insulting them in front of the classmates, rejecting them and focusing more on the high potential students would only affect the morale of the low potential students. This would in turn affect their cooperation and participation inside the classroom. Teaching is all about enabling the hidden talents and skills with which the students' interests are aligned because most of the time students would be forced to do certain things as others, in a certain way that the teacher knows and in a certain time limit the teacher sets. Each student is unique in terms of their abilities, learning speed and learning style. Thus, it is important to know that there is more than one way of doing things and that the students need to be enabled based on their styles and not on the teacher's style. This would make the teacher less stressed and more proactive in terms of handling students from multiple backgrounds. This would also help them inspire the students and learn from them.

There is a common notion that when one becomes a teacher one stops learning not just the subjects but also the students. Teachers' preconceived notions on the students, their inability to understand their issues and their superiority complex make them less approachable to ordinary students. Patricia Cross quoted once, "the task of an excellent teacher is to stimulate apparently ordinary people to do extraordinary things. The challenge each teacher has in front of them is not in identifying the winners but in making winners out of the ordinary". It's about bring the ordinary and struggling students forward and making them confident and successful. This would make the teachers to be motivating and inspirational rather than mere subject matter experts.

THE INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENT IN ONE'S DEVELOPMENT

Bronfenbrenner's ecological Systems Theory brings out five major levels a child would undergo as part of their development such as microsystem, mesosystem, exo-system, macro-system and finally the chronosystem. All these systems would affect the child in different magnitude and at different levels. It would be so interesting to know how all these different environment work together to complete a person's development.

Micro-system involves one's immediate family members such as the parents, siblings and friends etc. This immediate environment takes control of the child and form the basis for the child's personality, attitude and motivation. Continuous interaction with these people form the primary beliefs, customs and practices of the child. The type of parenting one has would affect the growth and would determine the person one would become. The birth order, family's financial status, social status etc. would all determine the opportunities and challenges the child would have in various walks of life.
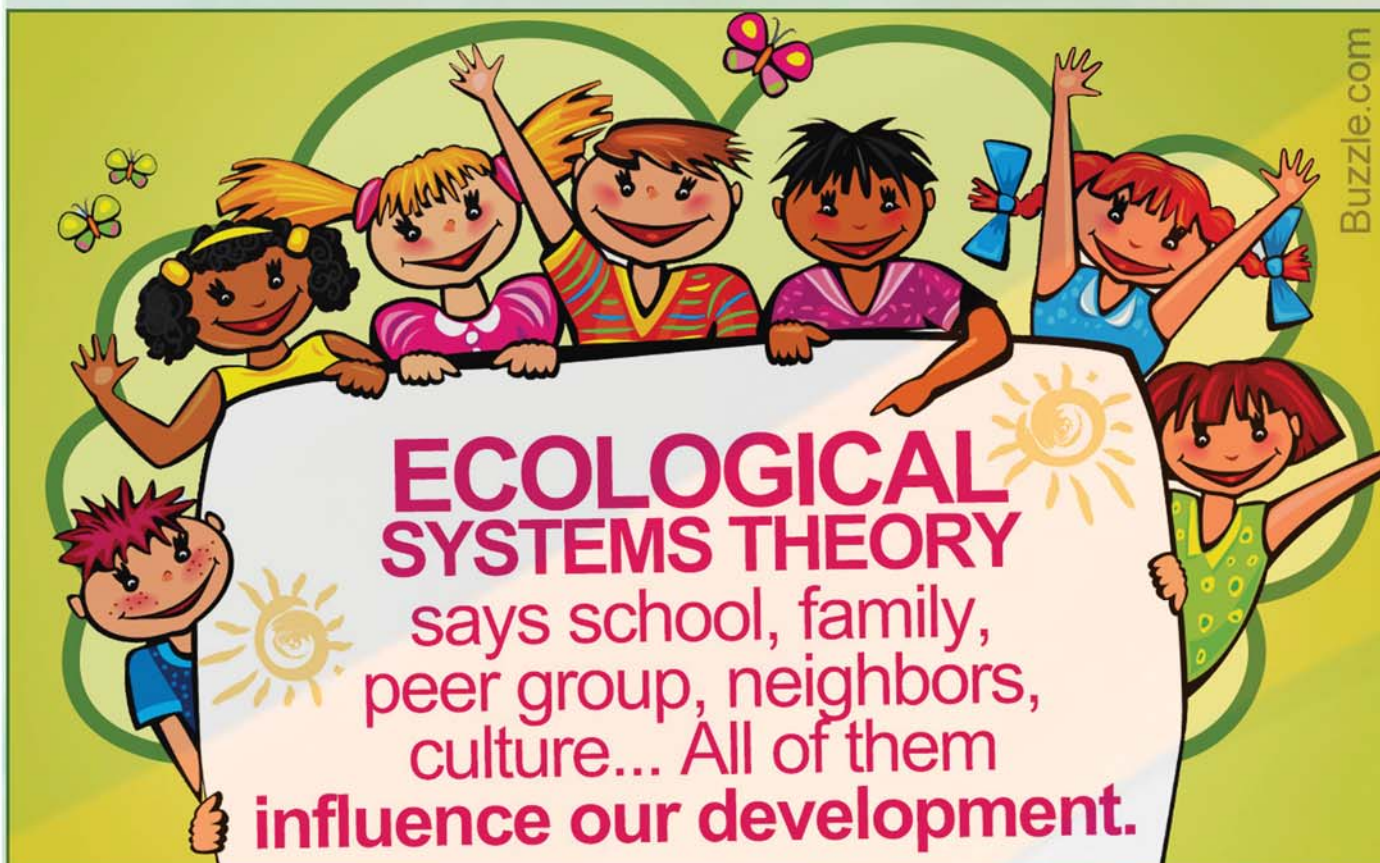

The Mesosystem refers to the interaction between various people that are involved in the child's Microsystem. The relationship between the parents, the relationship between the parents and the children the relationship between the friends, parents and the siblings, the relationship between the child and the school, school and the child's parents, religious interactions etc. would affect the child's growth.

THE INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENT IN ONE'S DEVELOPMENT

This means the child needs to have a better immediate environment that is bound together for the betterment of the child, rather than remain in conflict thus keeping the child in a confused state regarding who it has to hold high. The ego between the members in the first stage would determine the amount of healthy relationship and a positive outlook the child would develop in later life.

The Exo-system refers to certain factors with which the child may not be directly connected to it but would be affected indirectly. Factors such as the parents' workplace, social relationships, and social roles would all reflect on the child. For example, if the father or mother has a bad boss or if they are stressed out at the workplace, they would come and show it on the kids. If the parents are transferred, the child should move along with the parents leaving whatever it built over the years in the school and friends.

ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY says school, family, peer group, neighbors, culture... All of them influence our development.

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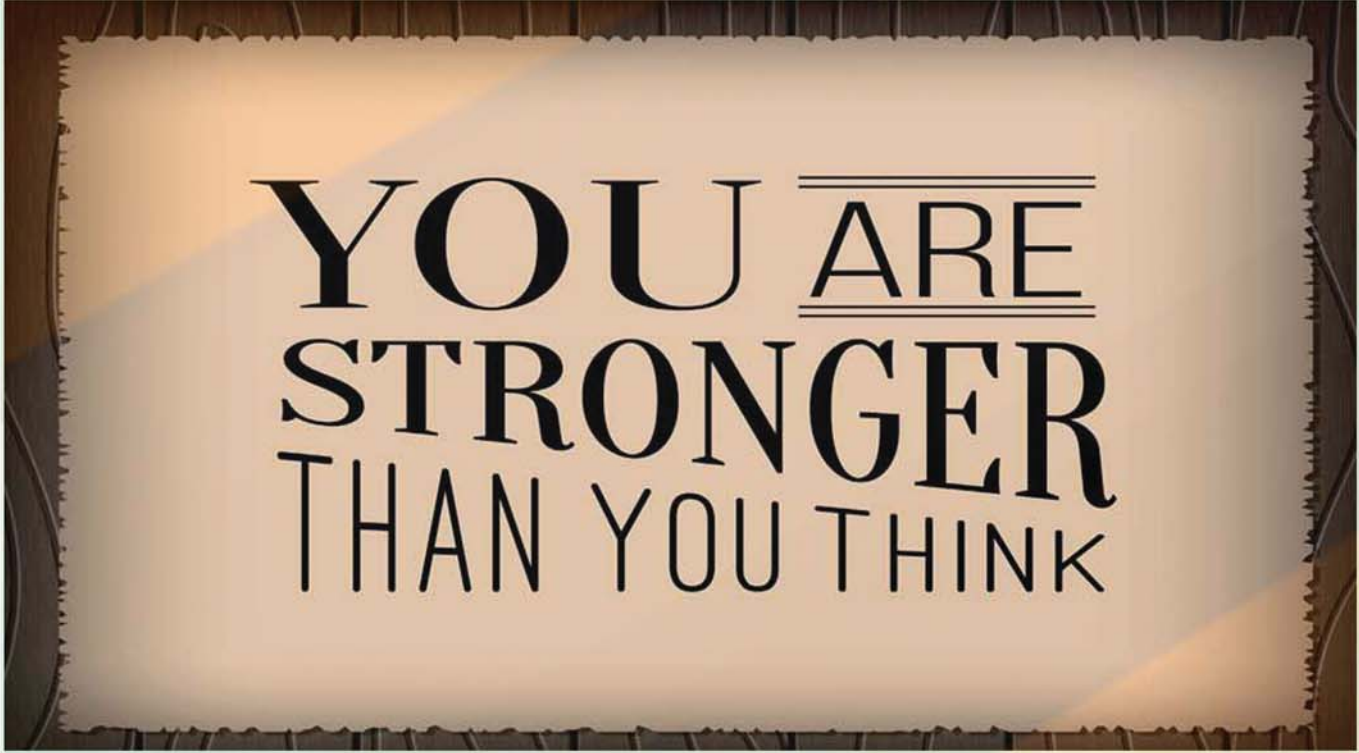
THE INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENT IN ONE'S DEVELOPMENT

The Macro-system consists the culture, religion, beliefs, customs and practices. The type of society the child grows would determine its attitude, personality and lifestyle in the society. That's why the culture in each country is so different and there are sub-cultures that has slightly different beliefs, customs and practices. The Chrono-system refers to different time period at which the child undergoes in terms of various changes both in the family and society. The changes in the family structure, arrival of new member in the family, the country's economic downturn or war.

So, when a child or student is viewed, one should take all these factors into consideration as one would have gone through various personal changes and all those changes would have impacted in the way one thinks, behaves and reacts. Someone who is new to the person wouldn't understand the person because of the differences in people's environment. People also hesitate to share about themselves to others as not everyone is an extrovert. Besides, they wouldn't trust anyone easily thus would try to suppress their struggles and force a smile on their face in order to cope with the peer pressure.

It's not that a person is bad when the time the person was born but various other factors would contribute in making the person the way the person is. So, next time when we look at a person, let's have a bird's eye view by taking all the environmental factors into consideration. Let's not over rejoice that we are fortunate and discriminate people who are disadvantaged in the society. It's not necessary for us to help someone but it's our moral dend ethical responsibility not to hurt anyone.

THE NEED FOR MOTIVATION

Almost everyone in the world looks for someone or something to get motivated. Motivation in any form such as gifts, words, patting on the shoulder are all motivators. A manager appreciating an employee, an employer announcing bonus, a parent appreciating a child, a teacher appreciating a student, a government recognizing citizens for their contribution etc. all examples of motivators. There are people who get motivated internally which means they set their own goals, wants and needs. They could accomplish whatever they planned to achieve without any outside influence or need for appreciation. There are others who wish to be rewarded, appreciated, given importance and accepted in order to stay motivated.

Abraham Maslow's Need Hierarchy is one of the most important motivational theories that has five layers such as physiological needs, safety needs, love and belongingness needs, esteem needs and finally self-actualization needs. Physiological needs refer to food, water, shelter etc. without which one won't be able to survive. People who struggle to achieve these would remain in these needs struggling every day. Those who successfully complete these needs would be motivated to move to the next need, safety. Many people fail in the third level of hierarchy because they are not able to balance their work and family.

THE NEED FOR MOTIVATION

This requires one to be away from all the dangers one is surrounded with. Once one is able to live safely, one would be motivated to look for family, friends and other intimate relationship where one would feel included. Esteem needs refers to the affiliation one would have with all the other outside institutions in the society where one would feel important. This would lead one to work towards one's self-actualization where one would travel inwards to find peace and happiness. It's here one would recognize the need for embracing everyone as one human race without discriminating anyone based on various parameters. If one is not able to accomplish any one of the needs, one would be forced to remain in that particular need, failing to move to the next need in the hierarchy. All the human beings strive towards self-actualization but very few finally achieve it.

Today, books on self-confidence, motivation and success are the ones that sell more in the market, which means there are many people out there in the society who look for something or someone to motivate them to gain self-confidence in order to become successful. People are becoming weak as days pass by because they are very comfortable with what they have or they are afraid to take new steps. Some people are happy with the basic needs thus they are not able to move to the next needs in the hierarchy.

THE NEED FOR MOTIVATION

Media exposure and social networking sites further cause more confusion in the human relationship where everyone learn to live a life and project themselves as someone else which is not one's real self. So they are always looking for friends on the internet without valuing their family and friends who are with them.

It would be possible for one to move to the esteem needs only if one is successful during the third stage. It's motivation that is at work when one accomplishes something significant and makes one as an important person in the society. People who are satisfied with the affiliation needs wouldn't be motivated to move to the esteem needs where one would face challenges, failures and even discrimination and rejection. Withstanding all these would make one embrace success in the society. After achieving all the four stages, a person would be looking to shed all the local affiliations and would strive to become global citizens by moving on to the self-actualization need.

It's at the end that one realizes that whatever they hold dear is meaningless and one should accept all the human beings as one race. These enlightened human beings alone would be able to become masters of change in the society. Those who have taken the bold decisions for social change are considered as Gods. So, it's basically motivation towards transcendence and divinity that helps one attain this status of universal citizen. These people are not bound by any personal ties.

It's motivation that would keep one on their heels and would help them achieve whatever they want to achieve in their lives. Besides, different people are motivated by different motivators such as people or events. It's the individual's responsibility to identify what motivates the individual and stick to it to improve the individual's performance at work and quality in personal life. It would be always better to embrace internal motivation rather than external motivation where we would be creating self-fulfilling prophecies and work towards achieving them.

INTRODUCING THE NEW EDITORS

When I took over Crusade from its founder Mr. K. Arulkumaresan in October 2014 after 24 editions, I wasn't very sure that I would be able to make any significant contribution. Today, we have released 74 editions so far and for me this is the 50th edition. Crusade grew from 4 pages to 24 pages in order to provide opportunity to many students. Nearly 500 students have contributed to various editions and I thank all those students. It gave me a very good experience and exposure. I was able to improve both my thinking and writing skills while working on the articles.

I wanted to write on few topics that I was pondering over a period of time and after completing a semester of teaching the first year students, I thought it would be appropriate that I pen down my thoughts. I hope the articles I wrote in this edition may bring some change in the way we look at and treat the students. I thank all those who associated with me in the process of preparing and releasing the previous editions.

Today, I think it would be better if someone else take over Crusade and take it to the next level. Thus, Mrs. S. Renukadevi, AP/English and Mr. M. Rameshkumar, AP/English would be the editors of Crusade from January 2019. Both are capable of taking Crusade to new heights and I hope more students would contribute. I wish them all the best.

MR. M. RAMESHKUMAR

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